

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A floor mat laid in a small animals rearing cage for housing and rearing small animals, said floor mat is a sheet comprising a temperature holding property to a degree that can keep the body temperature of the small animals, a flexibility to a degree that can wrap the body of the small animals, and a size that covers at least the entire abdomen of the small animals.

2. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 1, wherein the size of said sheet covers at least the abdomen and the head of said small animals.

3. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 1, wherein the sheet has a water absorption property and deodorization property.

4. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 1, wherein the sheet has a tearing resistance.

5. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 4, wherein the sheet is formed of an improved cellulose fabric wherein carboxyl group-introduced cellulose is formed in a shape of sheet.

6. (Previously Presented) A small animal rearing cage for housing and rearing small animals, said small animal rearing cage comprising: a rearing box having a floor and a wall provided at a circumference of the floor; and a floor mat formed with a sheet having a temperature holding property to a degree that can keep the body temperature of the small animals, a flexibility to a degree that can wrap the body of the small animals, and a size that

covers at least the entire abdomen of the small animals

7. (Previously Presented) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 6, wherein said floor mat is positioned upon the floor of said rearing box in such a way that a piece of sheet is folded to form folds.

8. (Previously Presented) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 6, wherein said floor mat is larger in size than the floor area of said rearing box.

9. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 2, wherein the sheet has a water absorption property and deodorization property.

10. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 3, wherein the sheet has a tearing resistance.

11. (Previously Presented) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 7, wherein said floor mat is larger in size than the floor area of said rearing box.

12. (Previously Presented) The floor mat according to Claim 9, wherein the sheet has a tearing resistance.

13. (New) The floor mat according to Claim 5, wherein the improved cellulose fabric contains 40 to 140 millimole carboxyl group per 100 grams of dry fabric.

14. (New) The floor mat according to Claim 3, wherein the sheet is formed of cellulose fabric wherein carboxyl group-introduced cellulose is formed in a shape of a sheet.

15. (New) The floor mat according to Claim 14, wherein the improved cellulose fabric contains 40 to 140 millimole carboxyl group per 100 grams of dry fabric.

16. (New) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 8, wherein the sheet is formed of an improved cellulose fabric wherein carboxyl group-introduced cellulose is formed in a shape of a sheet.

17. (New) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 11, wherein the sheet is formed of an improved cellulose fabric wherein carboxyl group-introduced cellulose is formed in a shape of a sheet.

18. (New) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 16, wherein the improved cellulose fabric contains 40 to 140 millimole carboxyl group per 100 grams of dry fabric.

19. (New) The small animal rearing cage according to Claim 17, wherein the improved cellulose fabric contains 40 to 140 millimole carboxyl group per 100 grams of dry fabric.